



*Repent and Be Baptized* | Shawn Johnson | 4.15.18

LG Weekly

## START

To get things started, go around the circle and answer the following question:

**If you had to give up one of your senses (hearing, seeing, feeling, smelling, tasting) which would it be and why?**

## SHARE

Welcome to our teaching series, Just Getting Started.

On the cross Jesus boldly proclaimed, "It is finished." As followers of Jesus, the work of the cross is complete, our sins forgiven and we have become new creations. As a result of the perfect work of Jesus, now we can boldly believe what the apostle Paul says when he writes, "the old is gone, the new has come" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

The work on the cross is finished but God is just getting started with us.

Hebrews 10:14 tells us, "For by one sacrifice He has made perfect forever those who are being made holy."

Even though we have been made perfect, day by day the gospel continues to make us more holy. God is working in and through us, by the work of the Holy Spirit. Theologically this is called progressive sanctification, where we are becoming more like Jesus throughout our lives as disciples of Christ. So don't be discouraged with the ups and downs of life--God is not giving up on us. He is a faithful Father who promises that He will finish what He has started (Philippians 1:6).

God develops our faith, purifies our motives and shapes our gifts for His glory. He is just getting started with that anger issue, addiction problem, impatience, envy, pride, or lust. You can name a struggle but God has given you a different name...son and daughter. The story is far from over and God desires more than anything for you to experience freedom in the finished work of the cross. He is just getting started.

"For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk, but of power." 1 Corinthians 4:20

### **Read Acts 2:37-41**

Peter's call to repent and be baptized was an incredible moment for the church. 3,000 people were cut to the heart and joined the movement that day (Acts 2:41). One of the most encouraging things about it is the fact that Peter and the rest of the disciples were leading the charge. There was nothing special about the disciples; they were uneducated, ordinary men (Acts 4:13) who spent the last three years making mistake after mistake (Luke 9:54, Matt. 16:23, Matt. 26:74). They were simple fishermen (Matthew 4:18-22), hated tax collectors (Matt. 9:9), zealots (Matt. 10:4), and skeptics (John 20:25), yet God used them to start the most significant movement of love the world has ever seen.

Knowing this about the disciples gives us hope. From day one, the church has been made up of imperfect people trying to pursue a perfect God. Today is no different. God continues to call broken people to be his hands and feet on earth. If God can use the disciples to start the church, He can use us to reach our neighbors, co-workers, and family! It is important for us to read and re-read this story often as a reminder that God's got this. Amazing grace is that He invites us to know Him and make Him known. He promises through the work of the Holy Spirit, to reveal Himself here and now for His glory and our good.

Why do you think God chooses to use imperfect and unqualified people to do his work in this world?

Our job is very simple, love God and love our neighbors (Matthew 22:37-40). Why do you think love is the main ingredient for God's plan?

GROW

### Read 1 John 1:9

Walking in the gift of salvation is one thing but walking in the freedom it offers is often a bit more challenging. Sometimes the shame or guilt from our past life lingers, holding us back from what God truly desires for us as a child of God. Or perhaps we forget to go to the throne on a daily basis for the forgiveness of our sins and carry the burden of our failures alone.

The Father longs for daily intimacy with you and part of what cultivates that intimacy is a regular, repentant heart. Salvation was extended to you when you invite God into your life and asked to be transformed into a new person. However, we are not called to repentance once. We are called to repentance often--as often as we need it.

You can confess sin and ask for repentance as often as you do sin. Sometimes that may be multiple times in one day. It could be once a day in your prayer time, as Jesus exemplified in the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:12), "And forgive us our debts."

Part of your growth as a Christian is adopting a repentant heart. The more intentional you are about this, the more grace and growth and intimacy and freedom you will experience. If you are struggling to go before God today with a sin you've been afraid to confess, don't delay when you get home to repent with a sorrowful heart and ask God to forgive you for your unrighteousness. Today is the day to step forward in grace and freedom!

How are you being challenged to adopt repentance and in what ways might the flesh be fighting you to do so?

M O V E

**Read Matthew 28:19**

Perhaps our greatest mandate as a Christian and our priority above all else is a simple mandate given by Christ: make disciples. Some may forget this calling in the pursuit of a dream or when halted by what's next. When I sit down with people who are in a place in life where they are unsure of what to do next, I always share this verse with them and tell them to start with making disciples. This mandate is that important!

God has you on this earth to proclaim His name and His goodness so that others will see His loving kindness and be compelled to know Him. You can do this by going public with your faith and sharing your own testimony, which Shawn shared the importance of. You can do this by living your life in a way that radiates the grace of God through purity and humility. You can do this in the compassionate gesture of serving others in need.

This week you are encouraged to move by finding ways to witness and proclaim the name of Jesus to the people in your world!

**Is there someone God has put on your heart to witness to? Who is that person and how might you be an effective witness to them this week?**

**How could you cultivate a greater awareness in your life to go and “make disciples” in the name of Jesus? Is it praying at the beginning of each day for God to give you the eyes to see others and courage to witness? Is it by having a more compassionate heart in public to serve others in His name? These are but a few examples but take a moment to share how God might be prompting you to be more intentional in this important calling on your life.**

## PRAY

As a group, spend some time praying with and for each other. Ask God for freedom and faith to have courage to run through whatever storm may be ahead! If you are in a coed group, consider breaking up into men and women's groups to share more freely.

## TO GO

"The Christian who has stopped repenting has stopped growing." A. W. Pink

Writers - Brittany Rust and Ryan Wekenman | Editor - Michele Williams